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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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Housekeepers' Chat — Mon. May 7, or later.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: Program includes notes on timely subjects of interest to homemakers.. Menu and recipes from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletins available: "Canning Fruits and Vegetables at Home," "The House Fly and How to Suppress It," "Clothes Moths and Their Control."

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The other day, just as I had gotten started on the weekly cleaning, I heard the back screen door slam, and a lively voice called my name.

"Something to read to you," said my Neighbor. "It's along the line of what we were discussing the other day--vacations, and why every housewife should have one. Stop sweeping for a minute, Aunt Sammy, and let me read you this article."

"Go ahead," I said, leaning on my broom handle. This is what my neighbor read:

"Everything in nature takes its resting spell, but we to whom is given free control of our wills. We speed ahead, breathlessly trying to do more today than yesterday, to accomplish more this year than ever before, more, and more, and more. Full speed ahead, we grimly go, until nature grimly says, 'It is enough, now you rest,' and lays us by the heels.

"It would be better to follow the rule: After work, rest. If there seems to be no time for rest, take it. Use a little of the money you are laying aside for old age, and push the evil day still further away. Insure yourself against old age by keeping your body young. Take a trip to the nearest town, or the farthest, as you can. Go out and see new people, and new ways, even though you return to say, 'I have seen nothing that looks as good to me, as my own garden gate. I have seen no people that looked more kindly upon me, than my own neighbors.' Even that discovery helps.

"Now and then cut work like a truant, and run away for the day. Push the Ford as far as she will go. Eat your lunch in the open, take your nap under the pup tent, cook your evening meal by the side of the roadside spring. Drink in the beauty of the sky and the woods and the water. Let your soul stretch its wings, and take on the quality that comes through the contemplation of the serenity of nature. Forget the duty; lose the feeling of anxiety that pushes you to the task ahead. Empty your mind, and fill your spirit with the power of the great intelligence of the universe. Rest this spell, that you may work tomorrow."

"There," concluded my Neighbor, "that's that, and I intend to have a vacation this summer, even though I can't dash over to Europe. Honestly, Aunt Sammy, I told so many people goodbye last summer that I got a permanent wave, bidding

them farewell. But I didn't come over to talk about vacations. I came to invite you and your family to my house for dinner. I know you'll be too tired to do any cooking yourself. Will you come?"

Of course I accepted the invitation, and as soon as I answer a few questions, I'll tell you what my Neighbor had for dinner. It was a delicious meal.

First question: "Will you please tell me how to wash my wool blankets, so they will be soft and fluffy?"

Sunny spring days are the days for washing blankets. Don't use strong soap or strong washing powder. Borax and ammonia solutions are the safest to use. Use soap in the form of a solution or jelly, and don't rub soap directly on the blanket. Have plenty of lukewarm soapsuds. Use more water in proportion to bulk, for wool, than for any other material. Squeeze and work the blankets in the suds, without rubbing. Press out the excess water, and wash in a second suds of the same temperature. Of course one never boils wool blankets, or any other articles made of wool. Squeeze the blankets from the second suds, and rinse them free from soap, in several changes of lukewarm water. The rinse water should be as near the temperature of the suds, as possible. Hang the blankets over the clothes line, with a half or fourth on one side. Squeeze the ends occasionally, to remove the excess water. When they are dry, raise the nap by brushing well with a stiff brush, or with a clean stiff whisk broom. This fluffs the surface, and makes the blankets look like new.

It has just occurred to me that you may want to know how to store woolen blankets, and overcoats, furs, heavy bathrobes, etc., pretty soon, so they will be free from moths. Perhaps you will store carpets, rugs, and some of your upholstered furniture for the summer. If you like, I'll send you the free bulletin on "Clothes Moths and Their Control," which contains reliable methods for getting rid of these troublesome insects. Have you heard about the kind-hearted old lady, who went to the drug store to buy a moth preventive? "Please, sir," said she, "don't give me anything that will hurt the moths--just something to take away their appetites."

Next question: "Where can I get directions for making flytraps at home?"

You will find directions for making flytraps in Farmers' Bulletin Fourteen-O-Eight, "The House Fly and How to Suppress It." This bulletin also gives directions for ridding the house of flies by the use of screens, fly papers, and poisons. The common housefly is the most obnoxious of all the summer pests. It is not only annoying, but it is actually dangerous to health, because it carries disease germs to exposed food.

You have probably heard the jingle about the early fly:

"The early fly's the one to swat,
It comes before the weather's hot,
It sits around and cleans its legs
And lays almost a billion eggs.
And every egg will hatch a fly
To drive us crazy by and by."

A good deal of trouble with flies may be avoided if windows are screened before the fly season starts. It pays to have well-made, tightly-fitted screens for both windows and doors. If you are buying new screens this year, ask for sixteen-mesh screening, that is, screen with 16 squares to the inch. It will keep out both flies and smaller insects. Screen cloth made of copper, although a little higher in price, may be economical in the long run, as it lasts many years.

If you want to know more about screens, send for the fly bulletin.

Next question: "Is it necessary to buy new rubber fruit jar rings each year?"

Yes indeed. It <u>is</u> necessary to buy new rubber rings each year. They should be of good quality, too. Do you know the test for a rubber ring? Double the ring together, and press the fold with your finger. If the rubber is of good quality, it will not crack. Good rubber rings will also stretch to twice their length, and return, without changing shape.

Here's another canning question: "Should rhubarb be peeled, before it is cooked?" I wouldn't peel rhubarb. The red skin gives a pretty color to the cooked fruit.

The canning season is certainly upon us. Here's another: "Please send me directions for canning rhubarb and asparagus."

I'm glad that question was asked, because it gives me a chance to mention the canning bulletin.

The full title of the canning bulletin is: "Canning Fruits and Vegetables at Home." It was compiled by Dr. Louise Stanley, who is chief of the national Bureau of Home Economics. The canning methods recommended in Doctor Stanley's bulletin are based on the most reliable information she could obtain. Even though you have never canned a fruit or vegetable in your life, I am quite sure that, with the help of this practical bulletin, you will have success. The directions for canning are so simple, and easy to follow, that I think even a 12-year-old girl could use the bulletin. The bulletin is free. The title, as I said before, is: "Canning Fruits and Vegetables at Home."

Just one more question, before I broadcast the menu. Here's the question: "Dear Aunt Sammy: I wonder if sometime you would broadcast the way to roast beef, using tomatoes. I am very fond of beef cooked with tomatoes, as they seem to give the meat a delicious flavor, and the brown gravy is, as my husband says, 'hard to beat.' When should the tomatoes be put in, at the first, or when the roast is partly done?"

Here's the answer: Tomatoes, because of their acidity, help to make tough meat tender. At the same time, the flavor of the tomatoes combines well with the flavor of the beef. Fresh tomatoes, canned tomatoes, and strained tomato pulp and juice, are all equally good to use when cooking beef.

<u>Tender</u> roasts, from the rib and loin of beef, do not require tomatoes, but there's no reason why they should not be added to give flavor to the gravy. Put the tomatoes in hot, when the roast is almost done.

Pot roasts and Swiss steaks, which are less tender cuts of beef, may be improved in flavor and made more tender by the addition of tomatoes. After browning the meat on all sides in hot fat, add liquid, cover closely, and simmer until tender. Tomatoes, hot or cold, may be used to furnish part or all of the added liquid.

Now we are in the right mood to talk about dinner. This is what my Next-Door Neighbor served: Spinach Timbales; French Fried Potatoes; Buttered Carrots; Mixed Pickle; and Chocolate Souffle.

I wish you'd try the Spinach Timbales, the way my Neighbor makes them. Here's her recipe, tested and approved by the Bureau of Home Economics. Six ingredients, for Spinach Timbales:

4 eggs
1 cup milk
1 cup finely chopped cooked spinach
1 tablespoon melted butter
3/4 teaspoon salt, and a
Dash of pepper.

The six ingredients again, for Spinach Timbales: (Repeat)

Hard-cook two of the eggs. Chop them fine. Beat the other two eggs, add the milk, cooked spinach, chopped hard-cooked eggs, melted butter, salt, and pepper to taste. Pour the mixture into greased custard cups. Cook in a pan surrounded by water in a medium oven for 25 to 30 minutes. When set in the center, remove and serve hot.

Hot, crisp French fried potatoes are next on the menu. I'll read the directions slowly, for French Fried Potatoes.

Peel the potatoes. Then cut them lengthwise, into strips about one-half inch thick. Rinse the strips in cold running water. Soak for two or three hours, in cold water, to remove as much starch as possible. Dip them from the water, and pat them with a clean dry cloth, to absorb as much moisture as possible. Heat a kettle of deep fat, hot enough to brown a small piece of bread in sixty seconds. Fry about a cupful of potatoes at a time. Remove them from the fat when golden brown, drain on clean absorbent paper, and sprinkle with salt. Serve at once, while hot and crisp.

The recipe for Chocolate Souffle is in the Radio Cookbook, which my Neighbor says she couldn't get along without.

To repeat the menu: Spinach Timbales; French Fried Potatoes; Buttered Carrots; Mixed Pickle; and Chocolate Souffle.

(The next Housekeepers' Chat will include a discussion of sun suits for children, a menu for a company dinner, and two new recipes.)

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